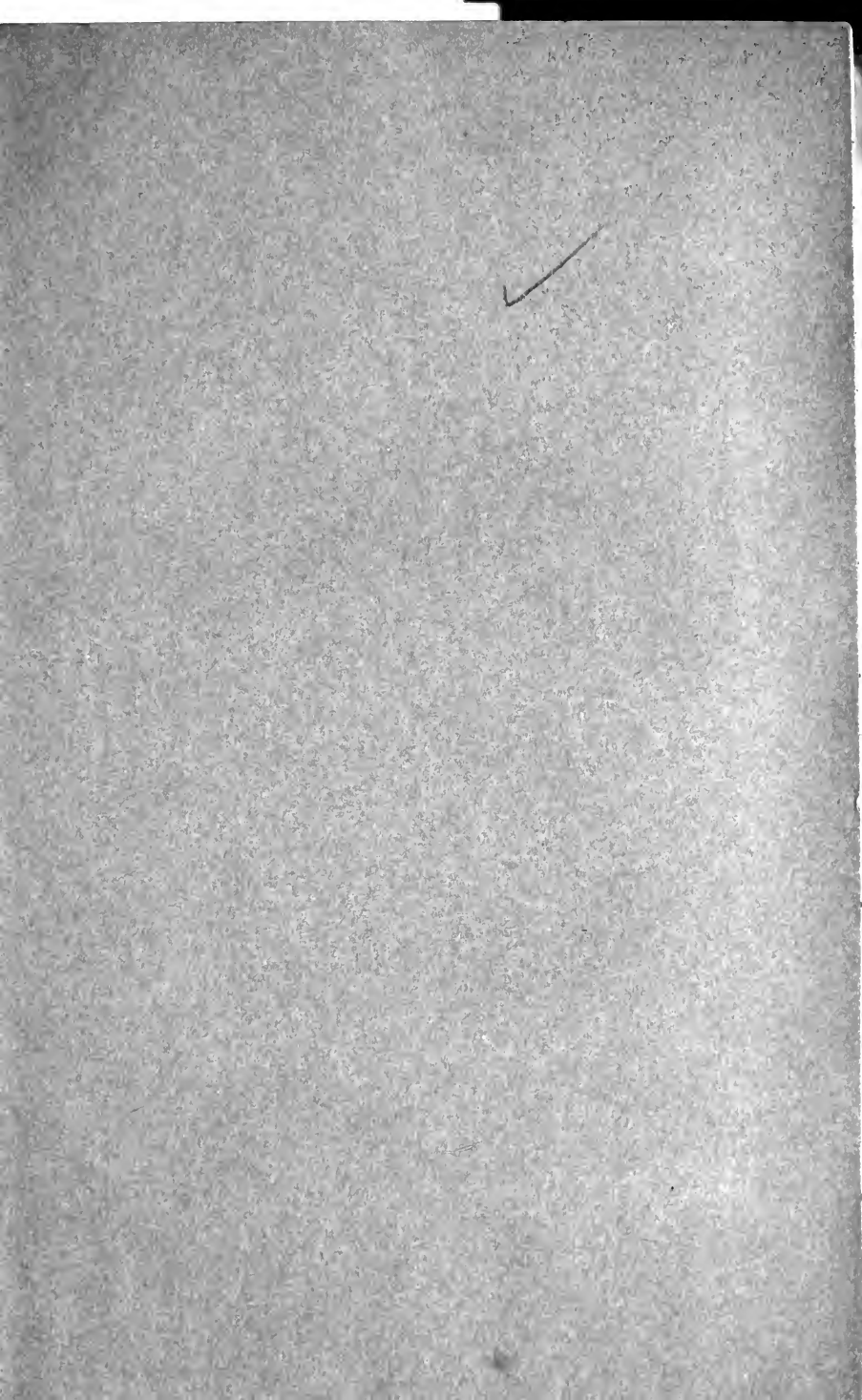




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# THE NATIONAL CHURCH REFORM UNION.

OFFICES: 1 ADAM STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.

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*"Wisdom cannot create materials: her pride is in their use."*—BURKE.

*"That now might be known . . . through the Church the manifold wisdom of God."*—EPI. iii. 10.

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THE Established Church of England is, in theory and in capacity, the Church of the nation. In modern practice it has become far less than this.

The Church Reform Union is equally opposed to sectarian rigidity and to Disestablishment; for either involves the other in the end. Exclusiveness leads inevitably, sacerdotalism leads consciously, to Disestablishment. From Disestablishment Disendowment is inseparable; and with the destruction of the National Church not only will incomparable resources for the nation's good be wantonly annihilated, but the basis for our common brotherhood will vanish in the creation of one sect the more.

*The Principles of the Union are these:—*

- (1) A National Church organized upon national endowments can most efficiently provide for the spiritual necessities of this Christian nation, since such an Institution can alone secure religious teaching and worship universally and equally for all classes and in all places.
- (2) Amidst divergencies of sects and parties there exists a common Ground and a common Purpose which all communions faithfully admit; and upon this sacred and eternal unity, not upon the jealous distinctions of human interpretation and feeling, the National Church must ultimately take her stand.
- (3) The Church of England as by law established, endowed throughout the land by the piety of our forefathers, and adapted from time to time to the necessities of each epoch by their wisdom, presents an incomparable organization for the maintenance of religion, and needs but Reform to make it national once more.

The Union, therefore, in the interests of Religion, of the nation, and of the Church, replies to the cry for Disestablishment by declaring for Reform: it maintains that the resources which have been consecrated to the nation's good may yet be readapted to the nation's needs; it resists the extinction of them as a measure

which would prove the regret of future ages and the stigma of our own, witnessing alike to the decay of statesmanship and the destructiveness of intolerant partizans.

As a body the Church Reform Union is identified with no theological school, and, waging war on none, invites the cooperation of all. We rest upon the conviction that, whilst individuals will continue to find satisfaction freely in every variety of worship and opinion, the first requisite of the National Church is, that it shall everywhere respond to the needs, satisfy the hearts, and awaken the affections of the people.

This the Church of England has done of old—growing with the nation's growth, responding by new phases to the nation's needs. The names of many a statesman and divine, of Theodore and of Dunstan, of Lanfranc and of Anselm, of Edmund Rich and of Cranmer, of Wycliffe and of Parker, of Hooker and of Chillingworth, of Stillingsfleet, of Baxter and of Wesley, the records of many a Parliament since the Reformation, testify to the continuity of the Church's development in the past. The time has again come for movement. We are resolved to reassert for the National Church to-day her arrested faculty of expansion and adaptation. We aspire to combine, to embody, and to formulate the desires and the hopes of the people for their Church.

Disestablishment is knocking at the doors. We call for the support, ere it be too late, of the thousands throughout England who are with us. We invite their attention and their aid to such measures of reform as may from time to time appear salutary and practicable. Our ends are not to be gained by convulsion or sudden revolution, but by patient and forbearing combination, by the intelligent formation of opinion on many topics, by action, by generous sympathy, and by liberal support.

*The Church Reform Union now invites attention:—*

*First*, to measures in redress of certain grievances in the position both of the Clergy and of the People.

- (i) The permission of the use of Burial Services other than that of the Church of England in the Churchyards.
- (ii) The Abolition of Clerical Subscription.
- (iii) Certain relaxations in the Act of Uniformity.
- (iv) The discontinuance of the compulsory use of the Athanasian Creed.
- (v) The removal of existing parliamentary and municipal disabilities attaching to Clergy of the Established Church.

*Secondly*, to the introduction of such Administrative Reforms as may increase the efficiency of the Church, and secure harmony and sympathy between the Church and her worshippers.

- (vi) The admission of the laity to a control in the administration of Church affairs.
- (vii) The reform of Patronage.
- (viii) The provision for the rights of minorities and neglected parishioners by the Public Worship Facilities Bill.
- (ix) Greater liberty in the use and arrangement of the Church Services.
- (x) The admission of others than Clergy of the Established Church to its pulpits.
- (xi) A Rearrangement by Royal Commission of the boundaries of Parishes and the incomes of the Clergy.
- (xii) A more complete plan for the superannuation of the Clergy.

Papers and tracts upon these and other questions which may arise will be issued from time to time to Members, and may be purchased from the Secretary [price 1*d.* each; 5*s.* for 100 (assorted) for distribution].

*The Church Reform Union proposes to advance:—*

1. By gathering into a common Membership all who sympathize with its fundamental principles, and by enabling them to express their views through a representative Council. Members are by no means held to commit themselves to an approval of all the proposals put forward by the Council; discussion is invited from all; and every possible opportunity will be offered for the expression and formation of opinion.
2. By the formation of Local Branches for the discussion and the promotion of measures of Reform.
3. By the dissemination of the principles of the Union, not only through its Members, but by publications, by advertisement, and by public meetings.
4. By Parliamentary action. A Parliamentary Committee will be formed to guard the interests of the Church; and Bills embodying the proposals of the Union will be introduced and supported by Public Meetings and Petitions.

*For these purposes large funds are earnestly solicited and urgently required.* Recognizing that the poorest have the chief interest in the maintenance of the Church, and inviting above all their support, the Union does not make subscription essential to its Membership. We rest in the assurance that Members who cannot help the cause with money will feel the greater obligation of giving their yet more welcome services, and we look to the richer to make good their deficiencies.

*Annual subscriptions, from 2*s.* 6*d.* upwards, are earnestly requested.* To Subscribers of £1 1*s.* and upwards, and to all who will themselves work in the cause, the publications, proceedings, and accounts of the Union will be issued as they appear. The

Secretary will receive the names, addresses, and subscriptions of all men and women who desire to be enrolled as Members, or are willing to undertake the formation of Local Branches of the Union.

Inquiries and information of all kinds as to local Church feeling or Church difficulties should be addressed to the SECRETARY, by whom also articles, addresses, and papers of other societies, bearing upon the objects of the Church Reform Union, will be gratefully received.

Subscriptions may be sent by Cheques crossed TWININGS & Co., by the new Postal Notes, by stamps, or by P.O.O. payable at East Strand Office to Lyttelton Gell.

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